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News Releases and other News Material

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USDA news releases are available by fax the same day they are issued. For information on how to use USDA'S **Ag News F A X** service, use your fax machine's touchtone dialing to call (202) 690-3944. At the voice prompt, press 9 on the phone and then press the start button on your fax machine. Instructions for using the service will be faxed to you.

For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

Remarks-

Prepared for Delivery by
Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy
National Hunger Forum
Washington, D.C.,

June 17, 1993

I am proud to welcome you to the National Hunger Forum. And proud that this is one of the biggest gatherings on hunger since the Kennedy days.

You are such an illustrious and respected group -- the best minds -- the warmest hearts -- that to recognize any one of you individually would mean recognizing all of you -- so we'll just get right down to the business at hand.

We have come together today to discuss hunger in America. Yet, hunger is a feeling few of us here have ever really experienced. Most of us had at least a cup of coffee and a muffin before coming this morning -- and of course, we've scheduled an hour for lunch this afternoon.

WHAT IS HUNGER?

So, we might find ourselves wondering, "What IS hunger?" Is it that slight pang that tells us it's time to head down to the cafeteria for lunch? Or is it the gnawing pain of not having had breakfast or lunch?

Is it saying "no" to that second dessert so we can lose a pound or two? Or is it chronic malnutrition from not eating enough, or eating too much of a limited diet?

Is it wondering which carryout to stop at to pick up a bite before the movie? Or is it wondering where in the world our next meal is coming from?

HUNGER EXISTS

Hunger may be hard to define -- but it is not hard to locate. Here in this United States -- a country whose national anthem sings of "amber waves of grain" and of "fruited plains" -- there are senior citizens who wake up hungry in the morning -- working people who toil at their jobs hungry all day long --and young children who go to bed hungry at night.

It's time we acknowledged our hunger problem. Some highly placed government officials and national commentators have actually questioned whether it exists. What planet do they live on? I'm only the Secretary of Agriculture and I can tell you: Hunger exists in this country!

Look at the shamefully familiar facts and figures: One child in five lives in poverty. The number of people on food stamps is at an all-time high of 27.4 million!! 12 million American children are going hungry. How can we not be painfully aware that hunger is part of the daily lives of our fellow Americans from Sacramento to Sioux City, from Sarasota to Cedar Falls?

USDA

Hunger exists. The next question is, what can we do about it? The U.S. Department of Agriculture is one of the most powerful tools available in this country to make a difference in the daily quality of lives of hungry people --of real American families -- all American families.

I feel privileged to have the honor -- and the responsibility -- of overseeing USDA. At the top of my agenda today -- and every day -- and for the next four years -- is the overall health and well-being of our nation's citizens.

But government can't do it all. We surely have a role to play, but we must also look for links with the private sector in fighting hunger through economic development -- fighting hunger through health care - - fighting hunger through food assistance programs -- fighting hunger through nutrition education, -- and fighting hunger through welfare reform.

QUESTIONS

By making hunger the focus of the first of our series of issue forums, I am honoring a passionate and personal commitment.

I am here to ask questions -- and to find answers.

-- How can we reduce administrative costs in the Food Stamp Program?

-- How can we -- and should we -- regulate fat and salt content in foods produced for commodity distribution?

-- How can we encourage the use of Electronic Benefit Transfer systems to help cut down on fraud and to remove some of the stigma of standing in the grocery store line with a book of food stamps in your hand?

-- How can we convince farmers that it is to their benefit to support food assistance programs -- to wipe out the false choice between farm programs and food programs.

-- How can we help families move toward self-sufficiency and independence --empowering them to go from the welfare rolls to the payrolls?

-- How can we offer targeted assistance to the most distressed communities?

-- How can we ensure that the basic benefit levels allow people to purchase an adequate -- though inexpensive -- diet at the end of the month as well as at the beginning of the month?

-- How can we ensure that staying eligible for food stamps doesn't force people to sell the very car they need to get out and look for work?

-- How can we make sure that the next generation of Americans doesn't have to choose between heat for their home -- or food for their children?

-- How can we reach out so that every child in need receives the food he or she needs to grow strong and healthy?

In short, how can we eliminate hunger in these United States?!! Together we can find the answers. Together we can do it.



News Releases-

Release No. 0476.93

Doris Stanley (301) 344-2963

Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

KILLING PEACH WORMS SOFTLY--WITH WHEAT

WASHINGTON, June 14--Southeastern peach orchards threatened by tiny underground worms called ring nematodes can be saved by a type of wheat, says a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

The worms, *Criconemella xenoplax*, feed on and destroy peach tree roots, said Andrew P. Nyczepir, a nematologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "The tree can suddenly wilt, give off a sour-sap odor, and then just die shortly after bloom," he said. The phenomenon is called 'peach tree short life' (PTSL).

Nyczepir said field tests have shown that planting a variety of wheat known as Stacy can significantly reduce the number of nematodes on sites previously planted to peaches and heavily infested with the pest.

Nyczepir and cooperators from the University of Georgia used a 1-, 2- and 3-year rotation system--planting wheat and leaving the land fallow and then planting wheat followed by sorghum before replanting the plot back to peaches.

Some nematodes were still present in the soil, but their empty intestines indicated they had not fed on the wheat roots, Nyczepir said.

Another test showed peach tree deaths from PTSL were no greater after two years in plots previously planted to Stacy than in plots that had been left fallow or were fumigated against nematodes before planting.

In South Carolina alone, 1.5 million trees died from PTSL between 1980 and 1990, resulting in a loss of about \$6.3 million per year. Although tree loss varies from year to year, Nyczepir said almost every orchard in Georgia and South Carolina is infested with the ring nematode.

Chemical control is still used for the pest, but nematicides are very expensive and may not be available much longer because of environmental concerns, Nyczepir said. Fumigating before planting costs \$275 to \$1,300 per acre. Only one after-planting nematicide is available to growers, and it must be applied twice a year to be effective. At about \$400 per acre each year, it must be used throughout the life of the orchard, he said.

A report on Nyczepir's work appears in the new issue of Agricultural Research magazine, the monthly publication of ARS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details, contact Andrew P. Nyczepir, nematologist, Southeastern Fruit and Tree Nut Research Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Byron, Ga. 31008. Telephone: (912) 956-5656.

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Release No. 0478.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES FEES FOR CLASSING 1993 COTTON CROP

WASHINGTON, June 15--The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to lower the fees charged to cotton growers for the 1993 cotton classification services from \$1.92 per bale in 1992 to \$1.87 this year.

L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the decrease for the 1993 harvest season is due to increased productivity coupled with stringent cost-cutting measures by AMS's Cotton Division.

The five-cents-per-bale discount offered to producer-agents who voluntarily provide centralized billing and collection services would remain unchanged.

The proposed cotton classing fees are set by a formula stipulated in the Uniform Cotton Classing Fees Act of 1987. Elements of the formula are: estimated volume of classing, the rate of inflation and the operating reserve fund of AMS's Cotton Division.

The costs of cotton standards used by the division's classing offices are included in the proposed fee. The costs of these standards, which amount to seven cents per bale and were formerly covered by appropriations, and will be recovered through the established fee for the first time this year.

In addition, USDA is proposing to eliminate the manual classing service for American Pima cotton and standards for cotton linters. High Volume Instrument, HVI, classing has become the preferred method of classing requested by growers, and the HVI quality data includes the same fiber quality information obtained from manual classing. For this reason, there is no need to maintain manual classing as a separate service currently available for American Pima cotton only. Requests for USDA cotton linters classification services have declined in recent years until the volume of classing does not justify the maintenance of the cotton linters standards.

The proposed fees were published in the June 10 Federal Register. Comments postmarked no later than July 12 should be sent to Lee Cliburn, Cotton Division, AMS, USDA, Rm, 2641-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC, 20090-6454; telephone (202) 720-3193.



Release No. 0479.93

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USDA RULES ON PROCEDURE FOR MODIFICATION OF, EXEMPTION FROM SOYBEAN ORDER

WASHINGTON, June 15--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued an interim final rule that lists procedures individuals are required to follow to request modification of or exemption from the Soybean Promotion and Research Order.

Linda P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said, "Anyone subject to the order who believes any of its provisions are not in accordance with law may petition the secretary of agriculture for a hearing."

The order, which became effective July 9, 1991, is funded by a mandatory assessment of one-half of one percent of the net market value on producer sales of soybeans. Assessments are used by the United Soybean Board and state soybean boards for a variety of promotion, research and consumer information activities. Producers may obtain refunds of assessments paid.

The interim final rule was published in the June 10 Federal Register. Comments, in duplicate, should be sent by July 12 to Ralph L. Tapp, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2624-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.



Release No. 0480.93

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USDA RELEASES COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR APRIL

WASHINGTON, June 15--Here is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly update of the weekly cost of food at home for April 1993:

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK IN APRIL 1993

	----- Food plans -----			
	Thrifty	Low-cost	Moderate-cost	Liberal
	(in dollars)			
<hr/>				
Families:				
Family of 2 (20-50 years)	50.80	64.20	79.10	98.70
Family of 2 (51 years and over)	48.20	61.70	76.10	91.10
Family of 4 with preschool children	73.90	92.40	112.70	138.90
Family of 4 with elementary schoolchildren	84.60	108.50	135.50	163.50
<hr/>				
Individuals in four-person families:				
Children:				
1-2 years	13.40	16.30	19.00	23.10
3-5 years	14.30	17.70	21.80	26.10
6-8 years	17.50	23.40	29.30	34.20
9-11 years	20.90	26.70	34.30	39.60
Males:				
12-14 years	21.70	30.20	37.70	44.30
15-19 years	22.50	31.20	38.80	45.00
20-50 years	24.20	31.10	38.70	47.00
51 and over	22.00	29.50	36.40	43.60

USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service computes the cost of food at home for four food plans -- thrifty, low-cost, moderate-cost, and liberal.

David Rust, HNIS acting administrator, said the plans consist of foods that provide well-balanced meals and snacks for a week.

In computing the costs, USDA assumes all food is bought at the store and prepared at home. Costs do not include alcoholic beverages, pet food, soap, cigarettes, paper goods and other nonfood items bought at the store.

"USDA costs are only guides to spending," Rust said. "Families may spend more or less, depending on such factors as where they buy their food, how carefully they plan and buy, whether some food is produced at home, what foods the family likes, and how much food is prepared at home."

"Most families will find the moderate-cost or low-cost plan suitable," he said. "The thrifty plan, which USDA uses to set the coupon allotment in the food stamp program, is for families who have tighter budgets. Families with unlimited resources might use the liberal plan."

To use the chart to estimate your family's food costs:

-- For members eating all meals at home -- or carried from home -- use the amounts shown in the chart.

-- For members eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent for each meal eaten away from home from the amount shown for the appropriate family member. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent, or one-fourth the cost shown.

-- For guests, add 5 percent of the amount shown for the proper age group for each meal.

Costs in the second part of the chart pertain to individuals in four-person families. If your family has more or less than four, total the "individual" figures and make these adjustments (note: larger families tend to buy and use food more economically than smaller ones):

- For a one-person family, add 20 percent.
- For a two-person family, add 10 percent.
- For a three-person family, add 5 percent.
- For a five- or six-person family, subtract 5 percent.
- For a family of seven or more, subtract 10 percent.

Details of the four family food plans are available from the Nutrition Education Division, HNIS, USDA, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.



Release No. 0481.93
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789
Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF 1993 PROGRAM SIGNUP

WASHINGTON, June 15--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that producers have signed contracts to enroll 175.6 million acres of corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, wheat, upland and extra-long staple (ELS) cotton, and rice in the 1993 commodity acreage reduction programs.

Under the contracts, 8.4 million acres were designated as Acreage Conservation Reserve; 11.5 million acres will be idled under the 0/92 and 50/92 provisions; 1.0 million acres will be planted to minor oilseeds under the 0/92 provision; and 5,450 acres of sesame and crambe will be planted under the 0/92 and 50/92 provisions. This total of 19.9 million acres of conserving use acreage compares to 19.5 million acres enrolled in 1992.

The acreage enrolled in 1993 commodity programs represents 83.1 percent of the 211.3 million acres of total crop acreage bases established for these commodities. In 1992, 78.8 percent of total crop acreage bases were enrolled and were in compliance with program requirements.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF THE 1993 ENROLLMENT REPORT

Crop			Percent Enrolled --%--	ACR 1/ -----	0,50/92 Planted to			Total
	Total Base	Enrolled Base			Idled	Minor Oilseeds	Sesame & Crambe	
	-million	acres-			-----	million	acres-----	
Corn	81.9	66.5	81.2	6.6	2.2	0.2	0.0015	2.4
Sorghum	13.5	11.0	81.3	0.6	1.5	0.02	0.0002	1.5
Barley	10.8	8.9	82.0	0.0	1.9	0.3	0.0009	2.2
Oats	7.1	3.2	45.8	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.0004	0.8
Feed Grains	113.3	89.6	79.0	7.2	6.2	0.6	0.0030	6.8
Wheat	78.5	68.3	87.0	0.0	4.6	0.4	0.0014	5.0
Up. Cotton	15.1	13.6	90.3	1.0	0.3	N/A	0.0007	0.3
ELS Cotton	0.3	0.1	53.5	0.02	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rice	4.1	4.0	95.5	0.2	0.4	N/A	0.0003	0.4
Total	211.3	175.6	83.1	8.4	11.5	1.0	0.0055	12.6

NOTE: Totals may not add due to rounding.

1/ Acreage Conservation Reserve.

N/A = Not Applicable.

Producers participating in the 1993 commodity programs agreed to reduce their plantings from the established crop acreage bases by at least 10 percent for corn, 5 percent for grain sorghum and rice, 7.5 percent for upland cotton and 20 percent for ELS cotton. Acreage reductions were not required for wheat, barley and oats.

Producers had the option to plant permitted crops other than the program crop on up to 25 percent of any participating program crop acreage base without having a reduction in the size of the base. This acreage is known as "flex acreage". Flex acreage is composed of "normal flex acreage" (NFA), which equals 15 percent of a crop acreage base, and "optional flex acreage" (OFA), which equals 10 percent of a crop acreage base.

Producers said they intend to plant 4.7 million acres of "flex" acreage to soybeans, 0.7 million acres to minor oilseeds, and 1.7 million acres to other nonprogram crops. These intentions are not binding.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF 1993 FLEX ACREAGE

Crop	Soybeans	Minor Oilseeds	Other Non- program Crops	Total
-----million acres-----				
Corn	2.318	0.072	0.232	2.622
Sorghum	0.275	0.021	0.131	0.426
Barley	0.121	0.105	0.190	0.416
Oats	0.084	0.025	0.048	0.157
Feed Grains	2.798	0.222	0.601	3.621
Wheat	1.497	0.366	0.976	2.839
Upland Cotton	0.142	0.040	0.083	0.265
Rice	0.241	0.041	0.029	0.311
Total	4.678	0.669	1.689	7.036

NOTE: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Producers participating in the 1993 Price Support and Production Adjustment Programs are eligible for other program benefits such as price support loans and deficiency payments. Producers who enrolled in these programs had the option of requesting that 50 percent of their projected deficiency payments be paid in advance for the 1993 crops of wheat, feed grains, upland and ELS cotton and rice.

Signup for the 1993 programs began on March 1 and ended April 30.

For a complete list of tables showing enrollment and "flex" data by commodity and state: Write to USDA, News Division, Room 404-A, Washington, D.C. 20250 or phone (202) 720-9120 and request press release number 481.93.



Release No. 0482.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623
Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623

ESPY SAYS CHILDHOOD STUDY STRESSES NEED FOR AGGRESSIVE ANTI-HUNGER STRATEGY

WASHINGTON, June 15 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said today that a Tufts University study showing that 12 million American children are going hungry is further evidence that alleviating hunger must be a high priority.

"On Thursday, June 17, we will be holding a national forum on hunger that will help us develop an aggressive strategy to address this on-going tragedy," said Espy. "If you look at these childhood poverty statistics and the continuing rise in food stamp participants (USDA Release No. 0428.93) there can be no doubt that we can and we must do better."

The Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy at Tufts University, Medford, Mass., released its report earlier today, based on Census Bureau data for 1991, showing that more than 12 million children or 18 percent of the 66 million Americans who are under 18 years old experience hunger. The study is consistent with data from the Current Population Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau, which show that child poverty between 1970 and 1991 increased by 37 percent.

The National Hunger Forum, the largest federal anti-hunger forum since the 1960's, will be from 9 a.m. till 5 p.m. at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium on Constitution Avenue N.W. (between 12 and 14th streets). More than 70 panelists from around the country will participate, including five government food assistance program recipients.

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Release No. 0483.93
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FGIS PUBLISHES NEW MOISTURE METER CHARTS

WASHINGTON, June 15--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service published revised conversion charts for the Motomco Model 919 Moisture Meter for peas.

The revisions correct system differences which were found to be statistically significant during a routine annual review of the charts.

The new charts for Austrian Winter peas (Chart DP-7-93), Smooth Dry peas (Chart DP-1-93), and Wrinkled Dry peas (Chart DP-6-93) should be used for all official inspections performed on or after June 1, 1993.

The Motomco Moisture Meter is the officially approved instrument for testing moisture in grains. Technical contact: Jim Rampton, FGIS Quality Assurance and Research Division, (816) 891-0450.

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Release No. 0486.93
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WINN-DIXIE RECALLS THRIFTY MAID BRAND MACARONI & BEEF FROM STORES IN 13 STATES

WASHINGTON, June 16--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that Winn-Dixie Stores Inc., a Jacksonville, Fla., food retailer, is voluntarily recalling about 144,000 cans of "Thrifty Maid Macaroni & Beef in Tomato Sauce," because some of the cans may contain small pieces of hard plastic. The product is produced in Canada and sold only in Winn-Dixie stores.

Although only two hours' production is believed to be affected, the entire day's production is being recalled as a precautionary measure. All 15-ounce cans of "Thrifty Maid Macaroni & Beef in Tomato Sauce" with the code "3015WN" embossed on the lid are being recalled. No other product is affected by the recall.

The products were distributed to Winn-Dixie stores in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Winn-Dixie stores have been notified to pull the product from their shelves.

"We urge consumers who may have purchased the suspect product to return it to the place of purchase," said Dr. Donald L. White, associate administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Winn-Dixie began recalling the product from its stores after 3 consumers complained about finding foreign objects in the product.

Consumers with questions about the recall may phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. This number also provides access to a telecommunications device for the deaf and the hearing impaired.

FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

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Release No. 0489.93

Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448

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ISRAEL ELIGIBLE FOR MORE BARLEY UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, June 16--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 50,000 metric tons of U.S. barley to Israel under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of barley will be made to buyers in Israel through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. These sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Israeli market.

This allocation will be valid under Sept. 30. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Janet M. Kavan, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



Release No. 0490.93

Sally Klusaritz (202) 720-3448

Arthur Whitmore (202) 720-4026

U.S. TO DONATE BUTTER TO KYRGYZSTAN

WASHINGTON, June 16--The United States will donate 5,000 metric tons of butter to Kyrgyzstan, said Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

The \$8.8 million donation (including ocean and overland transportation costs) will be sold in Kyrgyzstan.

Proceeds from the sales will be used to provide low-interest loans to businesses specializing in the sale of agricultural inputs and for establishing market places, such as farmers markets, for farmers to freely sell their products. Proceeds also will be used to explore the development of commodity futures markets and to improve health and nutrition programs.

The supply period of the donation is fiscal 1993.

The donation will be made under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, which authorizes the donation of surplus commodities owned by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to developing countries.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS, (202) 720-5263.



Release No. 0493.93

Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113

Carol Childers (202) 720-9120

KENTUCKY RETAIL MARKET AND OWNER FINED \$5000 EACH FOR MEAT LAW VIOLATIONS

WASHINGTON, June 17--The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Kentucky fined Black Angus Key Market, Inc., Louisville, Ky., and its president and owner, George D. Markwell, \$5000 each for federal meat law violations.

Markwell was convicted on June 2 of two misdemeanor counts, and his firm was convicted of eight felony counts for adding sodium benzoate to pork sausage and ground beef. Sodium benzoate is not approved for use with meat food products because it artificially preserves the red color of fresh meat.

Dr. H. Russell Cross, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service, said FSIS compliance officers investigated the firm and discovered the violations after receiving a tip from a county health official.
The court also placed Markwell on one year's probation.



Release No. 0494.93
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U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES FOR USE IN TAJIKISTAN

WASHINGTON, June 17--The United States will donate \$2 million worth of U.S. agricultural commodities for distribution to needy citizens in Tajikistan, according to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service.

Aga Khan Foundation, a private U.S. voluntary organization, will distribute 4,450 metric tons of U.S. agricultural commodities to about 63,000 people in the Gorno-Badakhshn province of Tajikistan.

Commodities include 4,000 metric tons of wheat flour, 250 tons of butteroil and 200 tons of dry skim milk powder.

The donation will be made under the Food For Progress program and Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949. The programs are administered by FAS.

The supply period of the donation is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, FAS, (202) 720-5263.



Release No. 0495.93
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USDA INCREASES FEES FOR SEED INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION

WASHINGTON, June 17--The U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase the fees for the inspection and certification of quality of agricultural and vegetable seed effective July 12.

L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said, "The increase is necessary because of increased costs in salaries, rent and seed testing supplies."

The fees for testing and issuing certificates will increase from the current \$29.40 per hour to \$35.40 per hour. The fee for issuing additional duplicate certificates will increase from \$7.35 to \$8.85.

The Agricultural Marketing Service conducts the certification program on a voluntary, fee-for-service basis under the Agricultural Marketing Act. Fees equal to operating costs must be collected for the service. The increased fees will ensure that the program is self supporting.

The fee increases was published in the June 10 Federal Register. Copies are available from James P. Triplitt, Chief, Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch, Building 506, BARC-E, Beltsville, Md. 20705.



Release No. 0496.93
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USDA TO INCREASE FEES FOR MEAT GRADING AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES

WASHINGTON, June 17--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed an increase in its hourly fees charged for voluntary meat grading and certification.

L.P. Massaro, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said fee changes are needed to offset increased costs associated with employee salaries, health benefits and additional

unbudgeted administrative overhead. The changes are necessary to ensure that the federal meat grading and certification program is operated on a financially self-supporting basis.

The proposed hourly rates are:

-- \$35.20 for base hours (40 hours per week) for commitment applicants (plants using graders full time);

-- \$37.60 for base hours for noncommitment applicants (plants using graders intermittently or part time);

-- \$43.20 for premium hours (overtime on any day, or any work prior to 6 a.m. and after 6 p.m. weekdays) for all applicants; and

-- \$70.40 for holidays for all users.

USDA's voluntary meat grading and certification services are provided to meat packers and meat processors nationwide on a fee-for-service basis that is required by law to be approximately equal to the cost of providing services.

The proposed increases appeared in the June 11 Federal Register. Copies are available from Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2638-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 720-1113.



Release No. 0502.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES PARTICIPATION IN OPTIONS PILOT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, June 18--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that producer participation in the Options Pilot Program for 1993 crops of corn, wheat and soybeans has exceeded USDA's expectations and that the numbers show a real interest in the program.

More than 1,000 farmers have enrolled 20,585,000 bushels in the program, which provides the benefits of federal income and price supports for commodities through the purchase of options contracts. The program is authorized by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990.

Corn producers in three counties each in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa and wheat and soybean producers in the same three Illinois counties were eligible to participate. Enrollment was held at the same time as signup for the 1993 commodity production adjustment and price support programs -- March 1 through April 30.

"In almost every county, corn enrollment was over the county limit and it was necessary to hold a drawing to determine which producers could participate," Espy said. "In those counties where producers did not enroll the maximum allocated quantities, the unused allocation was reallocated to other counties."

Program rules allowed individual producers to enroll up to 50,000 bushels of corn and 15,000 bushels each of wheat and soybeans. Corn enrollment was limited to 20 million bushels, but no limits applied to wheat and soybean enrollment.

The following table contains full enrollment data by county, state and commodity:

ENROLLMENT IN OPTIONS PILOT PROGRAM CORN 1/

County/State Limit	Bushel Enrolled	Bushels Enrolled	Producers Limit Enrolled	Percent of Enrolled
Champaign/IL. 2/	3,970,000	4,320,000	233	109
Logan/IL.	2,860,000	2,485,000	130	87
Shelby/IL.	2,065,000	2,090,000	152	101
TOTAL, IL.	8,895,000	8,895,000	515	100
Carroll/IN. 2/	1,005,000	1,005,000	49	100

Clinton/IN. 2/	885,000	885,000	38	100
Tippecanoe/IN. 2/	1,285,000	1,285,000	73	100
TOTAL, IN.	3,175,000	3,175,000	160	100
Boone/IA.	2,350,000	1,125,000	91	48
Grundy/IA.	2,675,000	3,070,000	153	115
Hardin/IA. 2/	2,905,000	3,735,000	128	129
TOTAL, IA.	7,930,000	7,930,000	372	100
OPP TOTAL	20,000,000	20,000,000	1,047	100

1/ Data reflects total number of producers and bushels accepted in OPP after county reallocation and drawings.

2/ Held drawing to determine participants in OPP.

	WHEAT		SOYBEANS	
	Bushels Enrolled	Producers Enrolled	Bushels Enrolled	Producers Enrolled
Champaign/IL.	5,000	1	355,000	38
Logan/IL.	0	0	60,000	7
Shelby/IL.	20,000	4	145,000	18
TOTAL, IL.	25,000	5	560,000	63
OPP TOTAL	25,000	5	560,000	63

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Release No. 0503.93
Tom Amontree (202) 720-4623

ESPY MOVES TO AMEND MARKETING ORDERS FOR ORANGES; SUSPEND VOLUME RESTRICTIONS

WASHINGTON, June 18--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture would seek to amend the federal marketing orders that regulate California/Arizona navel and valencia oranges and that hearings on the marketing orders would be held in the near future.

"To ensure protection of these essential tools which benefit farmers, as well as consumers, we must ensure they work properly. The extensive number of lawsuits associated with these marketing orders clearly indicate that the program isn't working as well as it should," Espy said.

Espy said that scrutiny of the orders, which came as a result of a substantial number of lawsuits, demonstrates widespread circumvention of the current program as well as division and turmoil within the citrus industry relating to citrus marketing orders and volume controls.

"The lawsuits have hurt growers, pickers, packers and consumers and are creating disarray," he said.

Espy said he is directing the assistant secretary for marketing and inspection services to schedule hearings to ensure that the marketing orders will work properly in the future.

Citrus marketing orders have been in place for over 45 years. Marketing orders are designed to prevent a glut or shortage of product on the market, prevent price wars and harm to farmers, and provide stability within the industry. Some orders, including oranges, have volume restrictions which are designed to act as a mechanism to stabilize prices and supplies.

While Espy said he believes the California/Arizona navel and valencia marketing orders should be continued so that the beneficial aspects of the program can be maintained, he indicated that he would suspend the volume restrictions--or prorate--feature of the orders until a satisfactory resolution of the industry differences is achieved.

"The apparent lack of industry consensus and alleged violations strongly indicate that a thorough review and reconsideration of volume regulations and the order in general is needed," Espy said.

Espy also noted that the Department of Justice would be releasing a proposed settlement on pending lawsuits regarding the alleged over-shipping of millions of dollars of navel oranges.

The Navel and Valencia Orange Administrative Committees, the agencies responsible for local administration of the marketing orders, as well as all other interested parties are being asked to develop proposals for amending their respective marketing orders.



Release No. 0504.93

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RURAL COMMUNITIES GRANTED FEDERAL FUNDS TO HELP DIVERSIFY THEIR ECONOMIES

WASHINGTON, June 18--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that 23 rural communities in 15 states will receive federal grants to study ways to diversify their economies.

Espy said the funds, granted through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, will go to communities whose economies depend solely on forest resources.

This is the fifth year that funds will be granted for economic diversification studies. These studies help communities find economic alternatives so they can move away from strong or sole dependence on a single resource like timber harvesting. They can explore alternatives such as secondary wood processing, value-added manufacturing, tourism, high-value agriculture, and recreation--industries that can take advantage of the available resources.

The one- to two-year studies will help communities identify the most viable options to expand their economic base.

James R. Lyons, assistant secretary of agriculture for natural resources and environment, said the criteria for communities to participate in the economic diversification studies includes level of dependence on natural resources, economic need, and costs and benefits of the community's proposed study.

Communities or community organizations selected for this year's grants are:

- ◆ Chugach AK Corporation, Alaska -- \$14,900. Explore tourism opportunities.
- ◆ Thorne Bay, Alaska -- \$27,500. Database, industry profiles, and development strategy for Prince of Wales Island.
- ◆ Palmer Economic Development Authority, Alaska -- \$6,000. Market search to recruit new industry.
- ◆ White Mountain, Ariz. -- \$28,495. Viability of area for agribusiness.
- ◆ Winrock International, Ark. -- \$28,000. Potential of manufacturing new wood products--wooden mini-bats, occasional tables, and bar stools.
- ◆ Foresthill, Calif. -- \$10,000. Exploratory study seeking options.
- ◆ Weed, Calif. -- \$20,000. Exploring viability of tourism.
- ◆ Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribe, Calif. -- \$25,000. Seeking options.
- ◆ Oregon-California Resource Conservation and Development Area, California -- \$8,043. Identifying collective natural resources and development opportunities in a 4-county area.
- ◆ Mancos Valley, Colo. -- \$15,200. Exploring opportunities in arts and crafts, services, cottage industries, and agricultural products.
- ◆ Montezuma County, Colorado -- \$30,000. Creating new opportunities for wood products using difficult-to-sell ponderosa pine.
- ◆ Bear Lake County, Idaho -- \$30,000. Exploring opportunities for agriculture, high-value timber products, and recreation and tourism.
- ◆ St. Maries, Idaho -- \$18,000. Feasibility of new lodging facility, restaurant, and convention center.

- ◆ Owsley County, Ky. -- \$20,000. Explore options in secondary wood processing, value-added manufacturing, agriculture, recreation, tourism.
- ◆ Western Upper Peninsula, Mich. -- \$24,000. Explore tourism opportunities.
- ◆ Lincoln County, Mont. -- \$30,000. Exploring opportunities for value-added wood products.
- ◆ Jemez Pueblo, N.M. -- \$30,000. Developing a strategic marketing plan to compete effectively in specialty wood products industry.
- ◆ Southwest Resource Center, Taos and Rio Arriba Counties, N.M. -- \$29,862. Opportunities to produce and market stone products.
- ◆ Port Siuslaw, Ore. -- \$30,000. Potential for value-added manufactured products and chipping operations.
- ◆ Berkeley County, S.C. -- \$27,700. Study hurricane-devastated area firms at-risk; analyze processing value-added wood products.
- ◆ Uintah County, Utah -- \$30,000. Feasibility of the Dinosaur Institute, involving tourism and recreation potential and educational viability.
- ◆ Harbormill, Inc., Wash. -- \$30,000. Identifying proper use of facilities owned by International Paper Company and ITT Rayonier.
- ◆ Appalachian Hardwood Center, W.Va. -- \$29,300. Analyzing of manufacturing of gypsum- and cement-fiberboard from recycled material.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

For studies in Alaska, contact Eugene Wheeler, (907) 271-2577.

For the study in Arizona, contact Cal Joyner, (602) 556-2076.

For studies in Arkansas, Kentucky, and South Carolina, contact Alan Pigg, Atlanta, Ga. (404) 347-7486.

For studies in California, contact Robert Erwin, (415) 705-2678.

For studies in Colorado, contact Bob Dettman, (303) 236-7073.

For studies in Bear County Idaho and Utah, contact Wes Harvey, Ogden, Utah, (801) 625-5259.

For studies in Michigan and West Virginia, contact George Lundy, Milwaukee, Wisc., (414) 297-3631 or Lew McCreery, Morgantown, W. Va., (304) 285-1536.

For St. Maries Idaho and Montana contact Dean Graham, Missoula, Mont., (406) 329-3230.

For studies in New Mexico, contact Larry Roybal, (505) 988-6940.

For studies in Oregon and Washington, contact Ed Allen, Portland, Ore., (503) 326-2729.



Program Announcements-

Release No. 0477.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES WHEAT STRIKE PRICES FOR 1993 OPTIONS CONTRACTS

WASHINGTON, June 14--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that the loan rate equivalent strike prices for wheat producers in the Options Pilot Program in the Illinois counties of Champaign, Logan and Shelby will be \$2.90 per bushel.

The strike is the price at which the holder of a call may exercise a right to purchase the underlying futures contract.

The Options Pilot Program was announced on Oct. 28, 1992 (USDA Release No. 1003.92).

Producers are allowed to use options contracts for income support. They may enroll up to 15,000 bushels of wheat in the program and achieve protection equivalent to target price and price support levels using the market system.

The target rate equivalent strike price for wheat was announced on Jan. 29 at \$4.20 per bushel (USDA Release No. 0083.93).



Release No.0485.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, June 15--Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	6.75 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	6.06 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	6.03 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	3.38 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

	Loan Gain and LDP Rate\$/Cwt.....	Marketing Certificate Rate
--for long grain:	\$2.03	\$0.48
--for medium grain:	\$1.84	\$0.48
--for short grain:	\$1.84	\$0.49

These announced prices and rates are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made June 22 at 3 p.m. EDT.



Release No. 0487.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 ASSESSMENTS FOR VIRGINIA FIRE-CURED, SUN-CURED TOBACCOS

WASHINGTON, June 16--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today announced that to qualify for price support loans, producers of 1993-crop Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and sun-cured (type 37) tobaccos must agree to pay no-net-cost assessments for deposit into no-net-cost accounts on all marketings.

No-net-cost assessments are 11.3025 cents per pound for Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and 11.3835 cents per pound for sun-cured (type 37) tobaccos.

The assessments assure that the tobacco price support program will be operated at no net cost to taxpayers.

The no-net-cost assessment is in addition to the marketing assessment of 1.395 cents per pound for Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and 1.233 cents per pound for sun-cured (type 37). The marketing assessment will be shared equally between producers and purchasers with each paying .6975 cent per pound for Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and .6165 cent per pound for sun-cured (type 37) tobaccos.

The no-net-cost assessment, plus the 1993 marketing assessment, means that a total of 12 cents per pound will be collected from producers on each pound of Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and sun-cured (type 37) tobaccos marketed from the 1993 crop.

CCC consulted with the Dark Tobacco Sales Cooperative, the producer-owned association through which price support is made available for Virginia fire-cured (type 21) and sun-cured (type 37) tobaccos, before reaching a final determination.



Release No. 0488.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES 1993 BURLEY TOBACCO NO-NET-COST ASSESSMENT

WASHINGTON, June 16--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today announced that the combined burley tobacco no-net-cost assessment and the marketing assessment will be 1 cent for the producer and 3.5 cents for the purchaser on each pound of the 1993-crop of burley tobacco.

CCC's analysis projected that gross losses under its burley tobacco loan agreements for the upcoming year could amount to 8.5 cents per pound for producers and 8.5 cents per pound for purchasers, when the potential losses on current inventory are projected over the normal sell-out period of 5 years. However, after applying existing funds in the no-net-cost account from prior years, CCC needs only to collect a no-net-cost assessment of 0.1585 cent per pound from producers and 2.6585 cents per pound from purchasers on the marketing of 1993 burley tobacco.

This difference is that only producers paid assessments for the 1982 through 1985 crops and the assessments collected exceeded the amount necessary to reimburse CCC for its losses. Accordingly, this excess amount has been credited to the producers' 1993 assessment.

The Agricultural Act of 1949 was amended in 1986 and requires that the no-net-cost assessment be determined so that producers and purchasers share equally in the no-net-cost account on 1985 and subsequent crops of burley tobacco.

In addition to the no-net-cost assessment, producers and purchasers are required to pay a tobacco marketing assessment. The marketing assessment for the 1993 crop was announced on April 15 as 0.8415 cent per pound for the producer and 0.8415 cent per pound for the purchaser.

Both the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative and the Burley Stabilization Corporation, the producer-owned associations through which price support is made available for burley tobacco, were consulted before a final determination was reached.



Release No. 0500.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, June 17--Tom VonGarlem, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. June 24. The user marketing certificate payment rates announced today are in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 17 through midnight Thursday, June 24.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the NE price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 84 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 1.40 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	44.02 cents per pound
	1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	84
II.	USNE Price	59.10 cents per pound
	NE Price	-57.70 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	1.40 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	57.70
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55
Average U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	- 13.68
Calculated AWP	44.02
Further AWP adjustment	- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	44.02 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	57.70
NE Coarse Count Price	- 53.17
	4.53
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	- 3.95
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT.....	0.58 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

The USNE current price has exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the current user marketing certificate payment rate is 0.68 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1993. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Current Price	NE Current Price	USNE Current Minus NE Current	Current User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate 1/
			cents per pound		
1	May 28, 1993	62.95	59.78	3.17	1.92
2	June 3, 1993	62.19	59.74	2.45	1.20
3	June 10, 1993	61.50	59.36	2.14	0.89
4	June 17, 1993	60.30	58.37	1.93	0.68

1/ USNE current price minus NE current price minus 1.25 cents.

If the USNE forward price exceeds the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP does not exceed 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period, a forward user marketing certificate will be issued. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for cotton contracted by exporters for delivery after Sept. 30, 1993. The USNE forward price has not exceeded the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks; therefore, the forward user marketing certificate payment rate is zero. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Forward Price	NE Forward Price cents per pound	USNE Forward Minus NE Forward	Forward User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate 1/
1	May 28, 1993	60.00	58.85	1.15	0 2/
2	June 3, 1993	59.88	58.63	1.25	0 2/
3	June 10, 1993	59.80	58.42	1.38	0 2/
4	June 17, 1993	59.10	57.70	1.40	0 2/

1/ USNE forward price minus NE forward price minus 1.25 cents.

2/ USNE forward price must exceed NE forward price by 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks before a forward certificate payment is applicable.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rates will be announced on Thursday, June 24.



Media Advisory-

Release No. 0501.93
Tom Amontree (202) 720-4623

ESPY, LEAHY HOLD NATIONAL DAIRY SUMMIT IN YORK, PA.

WASHINGTON, June 17--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy and Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., will convene the nation's first dairy summit in the Old Main Building, York County Fairground, York, Pa., at 10 a.m. Monday, June 21. The summit is scheduled to end at 5 p.m. the same day.

The summit, a forum to bring the dairy industry together to hammer out a national milk marketing strategy, will consist of two panels of approximately 15 participants each. Each panel will include representatives of producers, processors and consumers.

"The dairy industry is one of the cornerstones of American production agriculture and plays a vital role in our nation's agricultural policy," said Espy. "I am looking forward to the input this summit will provide."

Panel One, "The Current Situation Facing Dairy Farmers and the Industry," will discuss recent history of dairy programs. It is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. immediately following the opening statements.

Panel Two, "Important Dairy Policy Options and Alternatives Being Discussed Today," will deal with a variety of specific dairy issues, including federal milk marketing orders, deregulation, exports and the two-tier pricing plan. It is scheduled to begin after lunch at 1:30 p.m.

Time is set aside for audience participation and closing statements after the conclusion of Panel Two. The summit is open to the public.

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EDITORS: To get to the York County Fairground from I-83 in York, Pa., take the South George St. exit, turn left from South George St. onto Country Club Rd., right on Richland Ave., right on Linden Ave., left on Carlisle Ave. to the Fairgrounds.

